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**Deception Can  
Be a Necessity**

The president of the American newspaper publishers association, Irwin Maier of Milwaukee, makes a considerable demand on the Kennedy administration when he asks it to affirm that "there is no place in its program for the use of lies as an instrument of national policy." However different the country might wish it, the use of deception is sometimes a necessity.

After the U-2 affair of 1960, for example, there was considerable debate over whether President Eisenhower was wise to take responsibility, or whether he should have denied any knowledge of the incident, thereby sparing his world reputation and perhaps saving the ill-fated Paris summit conference of that year. Here was a concrete example of where a lie might have been used as an effective instrument of national policy. In principle, the nation might agree that the government has no right to lie. But on a practical level it is faced with certain cold war realities.

In the case with which Maier is most

concerned, the handling of the Cuban crisis, the administration was capricious and excessive in its use of a policy of deception. Quite likely it did, as Maier puts it, begin to corrode the trust of its citizens. But its primary aim was not to deceive its own citizens, but rather to deceive its enemies. As have other administrations before it, it weighed the situation and determined that deception served the greater good.

Responsible citizens will share Maier's concern over the damage total commitment to a policy of deception might do. There is no room under our system of government for an administration that has deception of its own people as a primary aim.

But to demand of any administration that it renounce the use of a lie as an instrument of national policy is to isolate it from reality. It is to ask that it vow never to do again what it knows it will have to do the next time a CIA agent is captured in a communist country or a state department man is found meddling in the internal affairs of a friendly nation in order to further free world aims. A government operating on this basis cannot hope to retain the respect of its enemies or the confidence of its own people.

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